

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of responding to a request for data about an enterprise, the method comprising the steps of:
- storing a plurality of names for a single entity associated with the enterprise as a first plurality of corresponding concepts in a database of concepts and relationships among concepts, which database describes a plurality of entities associated with the enterprise;
  - designating a first concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts as a normative concept;
  - receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the plurality of names; and
  - in response to receiving the request, sending a response including information associated in the database with the first concept.
2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
- storing in the database a first relationship of a first relationship type, the first relationship defined for the first concept and an alternative concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts; and
  - storing in the database a second relationship of a second relationship type between the first concept and a second concept not among the first plurality of corresponding concepts,
- wherein the second concept indicates the information included in the response.
3. The method of Claim 2, wherein:
- the request does not include data indicating a first name corresponding to the first concept;
  - the particular name corresponds to a particular alternative concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts; and

6 the database does not include a relationship defined for the second concept and the  
7 particular alternative concept.

1 4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the request does not include data indicating a first  
2 name corresponding to the first concept.

1 5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of names include at least one of a  
2 synonym for a first name corresponding to the first concept, an acronym for the first name,  
3 and a translation of the first name into a different language than a language of the first name.

1 6. The method of Claim 2, wherein the first relationship includes an attribute indicating  
2 the alternative concept is one of a synonym for the first concept, an acronym for the first  
3 concept, and a translation into a different language than a language of a first name  
4 corresponding to the first concept.

1 7. The method of Claim 5, wherein a synonym for the first name includes a misspelling  
2 of the first name.

1 8. The method of Claim 5, wherein a synonym for the first name comprises an acronym  
2 of the first concept or a translation into a different language than a language of a first name  
3 corresponding to the first concept.

1 9. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of adding a name to the plurality  
2 of names based on the data included in the request.

1 10. The method of Claim 1, wherein the entities include at least one of a set of products of  
2 the enterprise, a set of services of the enterprise and a set of activities of the enterprise.

1 11. The method of Claim 10, wherein the set of activities of the enterprise include at least  
2 one of administration, research, marketing, joint ventures and documentation.

1 12. A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for  
2 responding to a request for data about an enterprise, which instructions, when executed by  
3 one or more processors, cause the one or more processors to carry out the steps of:  
4 storing a plurality of names for a single entity associated with the enterprise as a first  
5 plurality of corresponding concepts in a database of concepts and relationships  
6 among concepts, which database describes a plurality of entities associated  
7 with the enterprise;  
8 indicating a first concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts;  
9 receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the plurality of  
10 names; and  
11 in response to receiving the request, sending a response including information  
12 associated in the database with the first concept.

1 13. The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, the instructions further cause the one or  
2 more processors to carry out the steps of:  
3 storing in the database a first relationship of a first relationship type, the first  
4 relationship defined for the first concept and an alternative concept of the first  
5 plurality of corresponding concepts; and  
6 storing in the database a second relationship of a second relationship type between the  
7 first concept and a second concept not among the first plurality of  
8 corresponding concepts,  
9 wherein the second concept indicates the information included in the response.

1 14. The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein:  
2 the request does not include data indicating a first name corresponding to the first  
3 concept;  
4 the particular name corresponds to a particular alternative concept of the first plurality  
5 of corresponding concepts; and  
6 the database does not include a relationship defined for the second concept and the  
7 particular alternative concept.

1 15. The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the request does not include  
2 data indicating a first name corresponding to the first concept.

1 16. The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the plurality of names include  
2 at least one of a synonym for a first name corresponding to the first concept, an acronym for  
3 the first name, and a translation of the first name into a different language than a language of  
4 the first name.

1 17. The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein the first relationship includes  
2 an attribute indicating the alternative concept is one of a synonym for the first concept, an  
3 acronym for the first concept, and a translation into a different language than a language of a  
4 first name corresponding to the first concept.

1 18. The computer-readable medium of Claim 16, wherein a synonym for the first name  
2 includes a misspelling of the first name.

1 19. The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the instructions further cause  
2 the one or more processors to carry out the step of adding a name to the plurality of names  
3 based on the data included in the request.

1 20. The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the entities include at least one  
2 of a set of products of the enterprise, a set of services of the enterprise and a set of activities  
3 of the enterprise.

1 21. The computer-readable medium of Claim 20, wherein the set of activities of the  
2 enterprise include at least one of administration, research, marketing, joint ventures and  
3 documentation.

- 1 22. A system for responding to a request for data about an enterprise, the system  
2 comprising:  
3 a means for storing a plurality of names for a single entity associated with the  
4 enterprise;  
5 a means for indicating a first name of the plurality of names;  
6 a means for receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the  
7 plurality of names; and  
8 a means for sending a response including information associated in a database with  
9 the first name in response to receiving the request, which database describes a  
10 plurality of entities associated with the enterprise.
- 1 23. The system of Claim 22, further comprising:  
2 a means for storing a first relationship of a first relationship type, the first relationship  
3 defined for the first name and an alternative name of the plurality of names;  
4 and  
5 a means for storing a second relationship of a second relationship type between the  
6 first name and particular information not among the plurality of names,  
7 wherein the particular information is the information included in the response.
- 1 24. The system of Claim 23, wherein:  
2 the request does not include data indicating the first name;  
3 the database does not include a relationship defined for the particular information and  
4 the particular name.
- 1 25. The system of Claim 22, wherein the request does not include data indicating the first  
2 name.

1 26. The system of Claim 22, wherein the plurality of names include at least one of a  
2 synonym for the first name, an acronym for the first name, and a translation of the first name  
3 into a different language than a language of the first name.

1 27. The system of Claim 23, wherein the first relationship includes an attribute indicating  
2 the alternative name is one of a synonym for the first name, an acronym for the first name,  
3 and a translation into a different language than a language of the first name.

1 28. The system of Claim 26, wherein a synonym for the first name includes a misspelling  
2 of the first name.

1 29. The system of Claim 22, further comprising a means for adding a name to the  
2 plurality of names based on the data included in the request.

1 30. The system of Claim 22, wherein the entities include at least one of a set of products  
2 of the enterprise, a set of services of the enterprise and a set of activities of the enterprise.

1 31. The system of Claim 30, wherein the set of activities of the enterprise include at least  
2 one of administration, research, marketing, joint ventures and documentation.

1 32. A system for responding to a request for data about an enterprise, the system  
2 comprising:  
3 a database of concepts and relationships among concepts describing a plurality of  
4 entities associated with the enterprise; and  
5 a processor configured to perform the steps of  
6 storing a plurality of names for a single entity associated with the enterprise as  
7 a first plurality of corresponding concepts in the database;  
8 indicating a first concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts;

9 receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the plurality  
10 of names; and  
11 in response to receiving the request, sending a response including information  
12 associated in the database with the first concept.

1 33. The system of Claim 32, the processor further configured to perform the steps of:  
2 storing in the database a first relationship of a first relationship type, the first  
3 relationship defined for the first concept and an alternative concept of the first  
4 plurality of corresponding concepts; and  
5 storing in the database a second relationship of a second relationship type between the  
6 first concept and a second concept not among the first plurality of  
7 corresponding concepts,  
8 wherein the second concept indicates the information included in the response.

1 34. The system of Claim 33, wherein:  
2 the request does not include data indicating a first name corresponding to the first  
3 concept;  
4 the particular name corresponds to a particular alternative concept of the first plurality  
5 of corresponding concepts; and  
6 the database does not include a relationship defined for the second concept and the  
7 particular alternative concept.

1 35. The system of Claim 32, wherein the request does not include data indicating a first  
2 name corresponding to the first concept.

1 36. The system of Claim 32, wherein the plurality of names include at least one of a  
2 synonym for a first name corresponding to the first concept, an acronym for the first name,  
3 and a translation of the first name into a different language than a language of the first name.

1 37. The system of Claim 33, wherein the first relationship includes an attribute indicating  
2 the alternative concept is one of a synonym for the first concept, an acronym for the first  
3 concept, and a translation into a different language than a language of a first name  
4 corresponding to the first concept.

1 38. The system of Claim 36, wherein a synonym for the first name includes a misspelling  
2 of the first name.

1 39. The system of Claim 32, the processor further configured to perform the step of  
2 adding a name to the plurality of names based on the data included in the request.

1 40. The system of Claim 32, wherein the entities include at least one of a set of products  
2 of the enterprise, a set of services of the enterprise and a set of activities of the enterprise.

1 41. The system of Claim 40, wherein the set of activities of the enterprise include at least  
2 one of administration, research, marketing, joint ventures and documentation.

1 42. A method of responding to a request for data about an enterprise using a data store  
2 that comprises a stored plurality of names for a single entity associated with the enterprise, a  
3 first plurality of corresponding concepts in a database of concepts and relationships among  
4 concepts, which database describes a plurality of entities associated with the enterprise, and  
5 wherein a first concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts is identified as a  
6 normative concept, the method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:  
7 receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the plurality of  
8 names; and  
9 in response to receiving the request, sending a response including information  
10 associated in the database with the first concept.